

University of Groningen

International Wader Study Group Annual Report for 2011

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Published in:
Wader Study Group Bulletin

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2012

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Verkuil, Y. (2012). International Wader Study Group Annual Report for 2011. *Wader Study Group Bulletin*, 119(2), 148.

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International Wader Study Group Annual Report for 2011

The year 2011 was an excellent year for the International Wader Study Group. First of all the Group was awarded the AEWA Waterbird Conservation Award in the institutional category, after nomination by Mike Moser, with Yaa Ntiamoa-Baidu and Christoph Zöckler acting as referees. This award recognises us as a group of volunteers, professionals and amateurs, working for more than 40 years towards wader conservation, through collecting and synthesising information on waders and helping to protect their critical habitats. You can all be proud! The award came with a monetary gain of \$5000. Secondly, the *Wader Study Group Bulletin* is now listed on Scopus, the largest abstract and citation database of research literature. The *Bulletin* is currently backdated on Scopus only to the beginning of 2011 but we are working on it. This means that your *Bulletin* publication will soon have an impact factor. Thirdly, and most importantly, our annual get-together, this time in Strathpeffer, Scotland, was a great success. The Conference was well attended, had an excellent programme and we all enjoyed the amazing atmosphere of the Scottish Highlands (see Volume 118(3) of the *Bulletin* for a detailed report by Stephen J. Dinsmore). We welcomed Julia Karagicheva who replaced Robin Ward as Membership Secretary. We thank Robin for many years of great dedication to the group! Here follows a short summary of the statistics of our group at the end of 2011. The full Colour-mark register, Membership, Editor's and Treasurer's reports for 2011 can be found on the IWSG website.

- Julia, our Membership Secretary, reports that the International Wader Study Group's membership for the year 2011 stood at 488 members. Most members now regularly receive electronic membership reminders and announcements of early-online *Bulletin* publications. To receive those emails make sure to keep the IWSG informed of your current e-mail address. This can be best done by visiting the IWSG website where you can view and edit your contact details. Furthermore, you are able to pay for your membership by credit card via the IWSG site. Why not take a look?
- David Turner, the IWSG Treasurer, reports that the accounts for the financial year 2011 ended with a surplus of £6,769. This is almost entirely due to the fact that we have continued to manage the costs of the *Bulletin*, falling to £12,400 in 2011 compared with £20,100 in 2010 and £15,900 in 2009. However, this surplus still remains less than the ideal amount to maintain sufficient financial cover for our annual expenses.
- In 2011 the Editor of the *Wader Study Group Bulletin*, Humphrey Sitters, managed 40 scientific articles, 24 papers and 16 short communications, with contributions from no

The General Secretary, Gregor Scheiffarth, in conversation with Hong-yan Yang during the Strathpeffer Conference excursion (photo: Debbie Buehler).



less than 21 countries. We would particularly like to express gratitude to all those who contributed in 2011: Marja Wren-Sargent for typesetting and layout, Włodzimierz Meissner for co-ordinating the *Ageing and Sexing Series*, Silke Nebel for compiling *Notes & News* and Rob Robinson for compiling *Wader Thesis Abstracts*.

- The Conference Co-ordinator, Jutta Leyer, recounts that the Annual Conference in Strathpeffer, Scotland, organised by the Highland Ringing Group and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, was attended by 128 delegates from 26 countries. The upcoming meeting is in France, 22–23 September 2012, organised by Guillaume Gélinaud and colleagues from Bretagne Vivante-SEPNB, Réserve Naturelle des Marais de Séné. Please visit the website for further details and registration. The 2013 Conference (27–30 September) will be hosted by Gregor Scheiffarth and colleagues, with the support of the Institute for Avian Research and the Wadden Sea National Park Administration of Lower Saxony, in Wilhelmshaven, Germany. The Conference will be back-to-back with the Annual Meeting of the Waterbird Society (24–26 September 2013). Please pencil the dates into your agenda.
- The Colour-mark Officer, Henk van Huffelen, reports that again in 2011 all submitted observations were processed accurately and in a timely manner, thanks largely to a team of 20-plus species experts (SPEX), who help the IWSG with processing sightings. In 2011, Darius Strasevicius (SPEX for Turnstones) stepped down; his job has been taken over by Jennifer Smart. We want to thank Darius for his contribution. And also many thanks to all other SPEX! In 2011, the IWSG received 42 scheme requests. The processing time for scheme issuing was 4–6 weeks. We would like to remind everyone to apply for schemes a minimum of three months before needed. We rely on voluntary work and requests received at the very last moment might not be processed in time.
- Project coordinator Simon Gillings reports that currently just two IWSG Projects are underway – the Sanderling Project and the Arctic Birds Breeding Conditions Survey (ABBCS) which is a joint venture of the IWSG and Wetlands International's Goose and Swan Specialist groups. The IWSG Project International Golden Plover Survey 2008 is now completed with the publication of the full report (in this issue), reporting on numbers of Golden Plovers from 16 countries. Restoration of funding of the ABBCS is still essential to prevent the degradation of this survey network which provides a synchronized circumpolar information resource on Arctic terrestrial ecosystems.
- The IWSG website (www.waderstudygroup.org) is currently maintained by Richard du Feu. Richard has indicated that he wants to step down as webmaster. Please contact the IWSG ExCo if you would like to recommend a candidate for this position.

In 2012 we hope to further stabilize the financial situation, partly through engaging new members and partly through obtaining external sources. Currently we are recruiting a new webmaster and a new publicity officer; if you are interested in filling one of these positions please contact me through chair@waderstudygroup.org. Really, the ExCo is a fun team to work with. Again I encourage everyone to publish in the *Bulletin* and to keep citing the published articles of the *Bulletin* as you have been doing. Looking forward to meet you all in Séné, France, in September!

Yvonne Verkuil
Chair IWSG